

Now, this will not be Congress's first historic mistake. The Smoot-Hawley tariff of 1930 "to buy American" sounded pretty good. It sounded like a good way to protect jobs by keeping foreign products out. But historians agree it was an historic mistake, setting off retaliatory waves, tariffs, and making the Great Depression worse.

The Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 sounded good too. The idea was, let's protect the country from enemies within our midst, mostly French then. But that turned out to be an historic mistake encouraging more protests and offending our traditions of free speech.

In 1969, the Congress found 155 Americans who were not paying taxes and said: Let's have a millionaires tax. That sounded good too. It turned out to be another historic mistake. Last year, it caught 28 million Americans before we rushed to patch it, to fix it for a year.

More recently, there was the Catastrophic Coverage Act of 1988 to help seniors deal with financial losses. The trouble is, seniors resented paying for it, and angry crowds surrounded the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee in his home district. Congress repealed that mistake, and the leader of those angry seniors is now a Congresswoman from Illinois.

Then there was the luxury tax on boats in 1991. That sounded good: We are going to get all those people who have boats that cost more than \$100,000. The trouble was, it raised about half the revenue projected, and it nearly sank the boat industry, putting 7,600 people out of work. A change in Congress repealed that one too. Rather than make history of this sort, Congress should learn from history. We should take Governor Schwarzenegger's advice this week.

He suggested:

So I would say, be very careful to the federal overnment before you go to bed with all this. Let's rethink it. There's no rush from one second to the next. Let's take another week or two and come up with the right package.

The Governor, of course, was concerned about the Medicaid expansion costs in his State—\$3 billion for California. He said:

[The] last thing we need is another \$3 billion of [state] spending when we already have a \$20 billion deficit.

So why the rush? We do not have the bill. We have plenty of time to deal with this. Most of it does not take effect for 4 more years. And what if in trying to fix everything all at once we get it wrong—will Congress be rushing back to fix health care again? Because if Congress makes another historic mistake, it will not be nearly as easy to fix as repealing a boat tax.

I thank the Acting President pro tempore, and I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we met before 7 a.m. on this Saturday morn-

ing, and I am reminded of the famous quote:

Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.

A snowstorm has struck Washington, DC. Yet 100 Members of the Senate will be called on in less than half an hour to be on the floor of the Senate to vote at this early morning hour. And for any who are hale and hearty and up watching or following this debate, the obvious question is, why? Why is the Senate in? What is it doing?

Well, we are in because the Republican Senators are filibustering the Department of Defense appropriations bill. This is the money for our troops, for our military, for their families, for their health care, for their equipment, for their paychecks. It is a bill which usually passes with a few patriotic speeches and little controversy. Yet the Republicans have held us now. This is the third day on the floor because they are filibustering the Department of Defense appropriations bill.

You might ask yourself: What is happening? Has the Republican Party turned on America's military? I do not think so. I think, in fact, they support America's military. But they are willing to use them and use their spending bill as part of their parliamentary procedure.

We know what this is all about. It is about delaying the business of the Senate and not just health care. They want to delay everything in the Senate. That is their strategy. That is what they have to offer to the American people. Not ideas, not alternatives, not solutions, but delay.

I suppose they think that is a winning way. The Senator from Tennessee just predicted in the next election the American people will rally behind this strategy of theirs of doing nothing, of failing to respond to the challenges facing America. I see it otherwise. I have this simple analysis of why I am here. The people of Illinois sent me here to try to do a good job for them and make some good judgments on the Senate floor, but basically to help improve their lives. If you do nothing, if you deny, if you filibuster, if that is all you do, you don't have much to show for it at the end of the day.

The record is pretty clear. We have been debating health care reform for more than 2 weeks, about 19 or 20 days of debate, on a 2,000-page bill. The Senator from Tennessee complains: Well, we just don't know what is in this bill. This bill has been posted on the Republican Senate Web site for more than 2 weeks. I think they know what is in it.

Do you know how many amendments they came up with to change the language of this bill in the span of 20 days? How many bright, creative Republican ideas came up to change this bill in 20 days? Four, four amendments in 20 days. The combined wisdom of the Republican Senate caucus came up with four amendments to this bill of 2,000 pages in 20 days and six different

motions to send the bill back to committee and stop talking about it.

Now the Senator tells us: We just need more time.

You have had time. You have had plenty of time. You have had time to offer your substitute. We have been waiting on the Republicans to come forward, if they think America's health care system could be improved, with their ideas. The Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN, has said he has a plan. He never offered it. I don't know if he tried to offer it, if the Republican leadership turned him down. He never offered it.

Senator GRASSLEY from Iowa said on the Senate floor: We have a plan.

Where is this secret plan? Where is the Republican plan for reforming health care? Carefully hidden, secreted away in a cloakroom? Is it under a snowdrift in a parking lot? What have you done with your plan? You don't have one. If you go to the Republican Senate Web site and look for health care reform, you will find it. You will find the Democratic bill because, frankly, they have nothing to offer.

Now comes the Senator from Tennessee and he says stop what we are doing. Let's stop right now. Our plan is to slow down, filibuster the Defense appropriations bill, and then slow down everything that comes after it in the hope that we will stop and do nothing. He argues that is good for the American people. Let me tell my colleagues what the Senator from Tennessee will risk for the American people if he has his way.

We know immediately—immediately—the doughnut hole in the Medicare prescription Part D for seniors is going to be filled across America. What it means is seniors who have a gap in insurance coverage for prescription drugs will have that filled. Eight million seniors in 2007 hit that doughnut hole because they had medical bills more expensive than what Medicare covered. We are going to fill that doughnut hole. By 2010, seniors across America, immediately, will see the benefit.

The Senator from Tennessee says: This bill will destroy Medicare. Not quite true. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office says this bill will put Medicare on sound footing. Medicare untouched will go broke in about 8 years. Medicare, because of this bill, will have another 10 years of sound financial footing—exactly the opposite of what has been stated on the floor of the Senate.

How many parents get worried because their kids are in college and they are on their family health care plan and they are about to graduate and they wonder if they are going to have health insurance. Well, in most places across America, most policies, by age 24 your dependent child is no longer covered by your family plan. Immediately, with the passage of this bill, we are going to extend coverage, providing immediate help for 13 million to